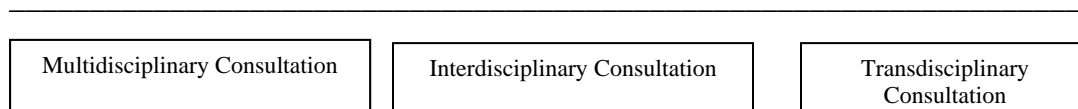


CONSULTATION MODELS: A COLLABORATIVE CONTINUUM

Consultation is a process to engage IT caregivers to provide them with new knowledge, skills, and support in order to facilitate high quality infant/toddler care. There are three basic types of consultation models with different philosophical foundations that guide interaction, coordination and collaboration between the consultant and the IT caregiver. These models can also serve to enhance communication and cooperation between consultants on behalf of infants, toddlers and families. When viewed on a continuum, each of these models guides the interaction process with increasing levels of formality and structure.

COLLABORATIVE CONSULTATION CONTINUUM



In multidisciplinary consultant models, professionals from several disciplines work independently of each other¹ generally within a loosely structured interactive framework. Consultation provided in this way can lead to information overload to IT caregivers; fragmented services for children and confusing or conflicting reports to parents. The multidisciplinary model may also place the burden of coordination and information management on the IT caregiver.

Interdisciplinary consultation models are characterized by formal channels of communication that encourage consultants to share their information and discuss individual outcomes across disciplines and with IT caregivers. Consultants representing various disciplines separately consult with IT caregivers, but all the involved consultants come together at some point to share information and may even collaboratively inform or develop plans for additional support.

The transdisciplinary consultant model is the most formalized approach and attempts to overcome the confines of individual disciplines to support engagement that crosses and re-crosses disciplinary boundaries and thereby maximizes communication, interaction, and cooperation. Consultants in this model are guided by tightly formalized procedures for communication and decisions are made within a team model. This model allows consultants to enhance cross-discipline knowledge to benefit the collaborative process.

¹ Fewell, 1983